

**Draft Meeting Summary
Fort Bragg MLPA Regional Working Group
January 14, 2003
Fort Bragg Town Hall**

Working Group Members Present: Jim Bassler (alternate for Daniel Platt), Carson Bell, Richard Charter, Larry Knowles, Steve Lackey, Bill Lemos, Don Lipmanson, Jim Martin, Renee Pasquinelli, Rick Thornton,

Working Group Members Absent: David Colfax, Charlie Lorenz, Daniel Platt, Jim Ponts, Atta Stevenson

Department and MLPA Planning Team staff present: Neil Kalson, John Mello,

RESOLVE Staff Present: Paul De Morgan

I. Welcome, Introduction, Proposed Meeting Objectives and Agenda

The meeting began with the Regional Working Group (RWG) Coordinator, John Mello of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), welcoming the members and observers. He then asked everyone to introduce themselves, and for new members, the constituency they are representing. Mr. De Morgan, Senior Mediator with RESOLVE and the RWG facilitator, then briefly reviewed the agenda, available documents, and ground rules. Two members of the public attended and the group asked them to introduce themselves. The individuals were guest speaker Dr. John DeMartini, a former professor at Humboldt State University and member of the Master Plan Team, and UC Davis researcher Chris Wibbel.

Mr. De Morgan then described the contents of the packet provided to each RWG member, described the meeting objectives, and reviewed the proposed meeting agenda. There were no questions from the group regarding the agenda. Mr. De Morgan then reminded the group of the groundrules established at the previous meeting.

Mr. De Morgan discussed the October RWG meeting summary. Given that this was the first summary, he spent some time confirming the review process with the RWG members. He noted that a copy was not included in the packet of documents because it had been sent out on November 6, 2002 and no comments were received. He indicated that since members were given an opportunity to comment, the assumption was that the draft was acceptable. He added that in the future, if substantive changes were made to a summary based on comments, a revised version would be sent out prior to the meeting. The group agreed that this process should be used for future summaries. Before finalizing the summary, some members noted they had not received the summary so Mr. De Morgan provided a copy of the summary to those members. The group agreed to revisit the issue of the summary at the end of the meeting. *[NOTE: the group did not have time to revisit the summary at the end of the meeting and closure on the document will take place via email.]*

Mr. De Morgan then asked RWG members and members of the public to briefly share any information or updates they felt other members of the group might be interested in. Mr. Martin provided information regarding the lawsuits recently filed concerning the Channel Islands MPA. Ms. Pasquinelli and other members were concerned that the current State budget crisis may

affect the process. Mr. Charter described a potential disaster avoided in the case of a damaged oil tanker passing offshore and the inquiry into that incident.

II. Department of Fish and Game Updates

Channel Islands MPA Network Decision

Mr. Mello then gave a presentation on the recent adoption by the Fish and Game Commission of a network of MPAs at the Santa Barbara Channel Islands, including an overview of the lengthy process, which led to the adoption of the MPAs. He noted that a lawsuit has been filed against the DFG Commission and the Department by a group of commercial and sport fishermen regarding the Channel Islands decision. During the description of that decision, Mr. Mello clarified for the RWG the definition of State Marine Conservation Area and Marine Sanctuary. Mr. Mello also informed the group that MPA's are not intended to restrict anchorages or compromise safety.

A couple of members offered additional thoughts regarding the situation. Specifically, Mr. Bassler noted that the Commission may revote on the Channel Islands decision and Mr. Martin and Mr. Charter listed several reasons forming the basis for the lawsuit regarding the Channel Islands MPA.

A question as to whether recent discussions regarding jurisdiction over offshore rocks impacted the RWG efforts was raised by a member. Mr. Mello noted that the Bureau of Land Management, State Parks, and CDFG co-regulate offshore rocks and that the MLPA boundary stops at the high tide line so the issue does not concern the group.

November 2002 Socioeconomic Workshop Overview

Next, Mr. Mello presented an overview of the first MLPA Socioeconomic Workshop held in Santa Cruz in November. Handouts were provided, including a complete meeting summary, text from Power Point presentations from two scientists, and some frequently asked questions. He then explained the purpose of the socio-economic meeting and reviewed the summary, while also addressing the importance of socio-economic factors in the MPA process.

A member suggested that socio-economic studies should not be focused only on consumptive users. The member added that socio-economists may be the wrong specialists to consult if they are having difficulty assessing intrinsic values. Another member wanted to know if the cost of potential accidents was considered in socio-economic studies. Another member felt that there is sufficient knowledge in the group regarding socio-economic issues and did not feel that there is a need for further study. Members requested a formal definition of intrinsic value and discussion continued regarding how to charge and who should pay for intrinsic value. In closing, Mr. Mello indicated the DFG would be taking these comments, and others, into consideration as a decision on how to proceed is made.

III. Review, Refine, Finalize and Adopt RWG Operating Principles

The group then moved to a discussion of the revised operating principles. Mr. De Morgan reminded the RWG that while the goal of the session was to reach closure on the Operating Principles, they can be revisited as needed in the future. He then walked through the proposed changes section by section.

Section I. No changes or comments to this section..

Section II. A concern that decisions cannot be modified was raised. Mr. De Morgan explained that the goal is an adaptive management process. There were no changes to this section.

Section III. No changes or comments to this section.

Section IV. Mr. De Morgan reviewed the changes to this section made during the previous meeting. There were no further changes made to this section.

Section V. Mr. De Morgan reviewed the changes to this section made during the previous meeting. There were no further changes made to this section.

Section VI. No changes or comments to this section.

Section VII. No changes or comments to this section.

Section VIII. No changes or comments to this section.

Mr. De Morgan asked the group for any additional comments or questions regarding the Proposed Operation Principles. A member wanted to know how to raise the issue of regular absence from working group meetings. The group wanted to know if all alternates had been accepted and how to propose new alternates. Mr. De Morgan advised the group to assume that all alternates had been accepted, but asked Mr. Mello to confirm this as soon as possible.

Mr. De Morgan confirmed with the group that the Proposed Operating Principles were now adopted. Mr. Mello then indicated he would post the Adopted Operating Principles on the Department web site.

IV. MLPA Process Documents and Tools to Assist the RWG's

Mr. Mello briefly reviewed the MLPA Draft Working Group Process Document (Section 5 of the RWG Binder) and the seven steps therein. The document outlined RWG responsibilities, objectives, purpose, and charges. There were no questions regarding this document.

Mr. Mello then explained the MLPA Master Plan Annotated Outline, which was provided to members at the meeting. No comments or questions were put forth. Mr. De Morgan asked the group to note that pages 3 and 4 applied to the RWG. A member asked if the RWG is working

toward one plan or many. Another member suggested that a mutually acceptable plan is best. Mr. Mello agreed that one plan would be useful, but noted that a range of plans, as noted in the operating principles, was also an option.

A general discussion then occurred about some of the tools which either are or will be available to the RWGs to help them develop products. Mr. Mello briefly explained a draft template being developed by the Department, which can be used to evaluate existing and potential MPAs using a matrix format. It would include such categories as depth range, MLPA goals which the MPA does or could fulfill, habitat types, species protected, existing enforcement/compliance and enforcement/compliance needs, and previous research/monitoring. A two-page document was distributed which lists the criteria used by the Master Plan Team scientists to develop the initial draft concepts for MPA networks in 2001. He indicated a flow chart is being developed to show linkages between various entities in the MLPA process as well as timelines.

VII. Public Comment Period

At the scheduled time for public comment, Mr. De Morgan asked if any members of the public wished to make a public comment. There were no members of the public present so the meeting proceeded.

A RWG member raised a concern with how the public is informed of meetings. He proposed official press releases to avoid potential criticism in regards to public input. Mr. De Morgan informed the group that they are partially responsible for informing their constituents and that the meetings are announced on the MPA website. Mr. Mello agreed to check out public information steps taken for the meetings and to ensure that press releases are made available. It was also suggested that methods of public notification be consistent throughout the state to avoid potential criticism.

VIII. Begin Review and Discussion of Existing MPA's

The group then began review and discussion of existing MPA's. Mr. De Morgan asked the group to refer to RWG Binder tab 5, page 8. Mr. Mello began discussion with a description of the regulations in the Punta Gorda Marine Reserve and referred the group to the Departments evaluation of each of the seven MPA's in the Fort Bragg working group area. There was discussion regarding the recent Shelf closure and if it is possible to link the formation of MPA's with existing regulations.

GIS Presentation

Mr. De Morgan introduced Cynthia Rossi, from the Fort Bragg DFG office. Ms. Rossi then gave a presentation on GIS (Geographical Information Systems) technology as a tool available to the RWG. She began with a general introduction to GIS in ArcGIS 8.2 and then offered examples of the uses and capabilities of GIS technology.

After some discussion, members asked Ms. Rossi to develop a list of the possible GIS layers available to the RWG and any other information that may be useful in order for them to better

understand the ways GIS can be utilized in achieving their objectives. Dr. DeMartini suggested that the group consider Areas of Special Biological Significance a source of information. Ms. Rossi continued with her demonstration and Mr. Mello illustrated the boundaries of current MPA's in the Ft. Bragg region. A member requested coordinates for the MPA boundaries and was advised that the coordinates are available in Title 14.

IX. Science Presentations: Getting to Know the Coast

Mr. Pete Kalvass, Associate Marine Biologist, DFG in Fort Bragg, began his presentation highlighting recent MPA research by Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans (PISCO), California State University (CSU), and UC Cooperatives on the North Coast. Mr. Kalvass gave an overview of abalone research and reported that reserves are valuable as control sites. He described fisheries independent and fisheries dependent sampling and reviewed the DFG's process of conducting fieldwork, evaluating data, and making recommendations. Mr. Kalvass reported on the current Abalone Recovery Management Plan status then began describing Sea Urchin studies conducted by the DFG. The description of sea urchin studies included graphs describing effect of the fishery, the life history of the sea urchin, the dynamic between sea urchin and abalone, and an introduction to the use of Remote Operated Vehicles (ROV's).

Members requested summaries of studies conducted. Mr. Kalvass provided sources for available summaries: Abalone CEQA, Abalone Recovery and Management Plan, California Living Marine Resources: A Status Report. Other members requested that information such as papers, stock assessments and ROV videos be consolidated and be made available to the group. Mr. De Morgan noted and recorded the requests.

Dr. John DeMartini, formerly with the Department of Biological Sciences at Humboldt State University, began his presentation entitled A Brief Overview of Primarily Shallow Rocky Bottoms from Shelter Cove to Point Arena. He introduced himself and offered ways to look at the variables involved in describing a habitat. Dr. DeMartini introduced survey techniques and biogeographical differences between areas. He emphasized his "Black Box" concept of connections, patchiness, and aesthetics in different habitats. He addressed the concept of a baseline temporally and spatially. At the conclusion of the presentations, the members thanked both Dr. DeMartini and Mr. Kalvass for their time. Members indicated having a Master Plan Team member attending each meeting would be very helpful. Mr. De Morgan informed the group that members and advisors on the Master Plan Team were available upon request and Dr. DeMartini indicated he would be willing to participate as much as possible.

X. Continue Review and Discussion of Existing MPAs

Mr. De Morgan then asked RWG members to consider two questions provided on the agenda:

1. What are the data, people, sources that the RWG would like to have? Also, is there any resource members would like that does not yet exist?
2. What are some ideas and suggestions on how to move forward from here?

Regarding the first question members generally agreed that a survey of relevant papers be made available to the group or to develop a RWG bibliography to be placed at some accessible location. Mr. Mello agreed to develop a bibliography with information on how to access documents (include some of the papers for each existing MPA in the region) and to consider creating a ‘library’ of documents where any member could access them. A member also requested clear guidelines from the Master Plan Team on what their requirements are for a MPA.

Coming out of this discussion, the group agreed that a useful step to take at the next meeting would be to have each member describe, to the rest of the RWG, their own perspectives and experiences with the resource. In addition, they agreed that sharing their concerns and goals for the MPA process would be helpful. One specific step Mr. Mello agreed to see accomplished was development of large scale maps of the area to use in sharing perspectives on the resource. In addition, it was suggested that a memo describing an outline of what was expected from each presentation should be developed.

A member also requested guidance regarding the definition of representative and duplicate areas and, specifically, if the group is mandated to protect habitat only or habitat and specific organisms. Mr. Mello agreed to investigate this and other questions raised during the discussion.

In regards to the second question, members agreed that they would like to see what common interests are shared and what differences there are before hearing from more experts. Mr. De Morgan summarized the discussion and asked that “show and tell” be the focus of the next meeting.

XI. Next Step Tasks, Meeting Summary, and Acknowledgements

Mr. De Morgan summarized the next steps for the RWG and then informed the group that he will be sending a next steps memo to members for their review.

Next steps included the following:

- inform absent members of meeting content,
- investigate alternate approval,
- develop a bibliography,
- investigate and develop a public notification protocol,
- develop maps, develop agenda for the next meeting, and
- schedule the next meeting.

Mr. De Morgan and Mr. Mello thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting.